

alternatives. H.R. 400 creates no opportunity to steal the contents of a published application.

Our opponents believe that the patent system should serve only the selfish interests of those applicants wishing to abuse the process by suing American inventors who develop technology and create jobs. In contrast, the Constitution charges the Congress with the responsibility of creating a system that balances the legitimate needs.

COMBAT BOOTS FROM CHINA?

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, last week the Pentagon denied that combat boots made in China were issued to our troops. The Pentagon said they awarded four contracts to American companies. It was impossible for that to happen.

Mr. Speaker, it is evident that the Pentagon's left foot does not know what their right foot is wearing. I have Nighthawk combat boots in my possession, made in China, that were issued to a sergeant of the Air Force Reserve.

Now, let us tell it like it is. The Pentagon has always told us in debates, if they could not buy those cheaper imports, they could not keep their costs down. You know what I tell Congress to do? Tell the Pentagon that we can hire generals and admirals a lot cheaper from Korea, too, and we could keep the cost down.

I am asking my colleagues to join me in investigating this matter, why military combat boots were issued to our troops.

HOW COMP TIME WORKS

(Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to give an example of how comp time would work under H.R. 1, the Working Families Flexibility Act.

Let us say an employee works 10 hours of overtime, 50 hours total in a week in January. She chooses comp time in compensation for the overtime hours. Her paycheck for the week reflects pay for 40 hours at her regular hourly rate. She puts 15 hours, one and a half hours for every hour of overtime, into her comp time bank. She decides to use her comp time during a week in May to visit a friend. During the week in May she works 25 hours, uses 15 hours of comp time, and her paycheck for the week is 40 hours. She pays taxes, and is credited with wages when she is paid for the comp time in May.

This is what public sector employees have been able to do for years. H.R. 1 would give private sector employees the same choice. H.R. 1 does not require employers to offer comp time. It

protects the employee's voluntary choice whether or not to take time off as compensation for working overtime hours.

H.R. 1, the Working Families Flexibility Act, is commonsense legislation, and as we look at the public sector, we know it works. I urge my colleagues to support it. It is family friendly.

REPUBLICANS NEED TO OFFER BUDGET PROPOSAL OF THEIR OWN

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, yesterday Speaker GINGRICH stood in the well of the Chamber and he reiterated the 13 points of the Republican agenda. One of these priorities, balancing the Federal budget, is one both Democrats and Republicans share.

But, Mr. Speaker, actions speak louder than words. We can all talk about the importance of balancing the budget, but it is only the Democrats who have put a balanced budget on the table. The Republicans have yet to offer a budget proposal of their own.

Every day American families find a way to balance their own household budgets. They expect Congress to do the same. We cannot let down these families. We must find a way to balance the Federal budget.

The Democrats have produced a balanced budget proposal. Now it is time for the Republicans to quit talking, to start acting. It is time for them to produce a budget proposal.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CAMP). Pursuant to the provisions of clause 5 of rule I, the Chair announces that he will postpone further proceedings today on each motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 4 of rule XV.

Such rollcall votes, if postponed, will be taken after debate has concluded on all motions to suspend the rules, but not before 5 p.m. today.

VICTIM RIGHTS CLARIFICATION ACT OF 1997

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 924) to amend title 18, United States Code, to give further assurance to the right of victims of crime to attend and observe the trials of those accused of the crime, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 924

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Victim Rights Clarification Act of 1997".

SEC. 2. RIGHTS OF VICTIMS TO ATTEND AND OBSERVE TRIAL.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 223 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

"§3510. Rights of victims to attend and observe trial

"(a) NON-CAPITAL CASES.—Notwithstanding any statute, rule, or other provision of law, a United States district court shall not order any victim of an offense excluded from the trial of a defendant accused of that offense because such victim may, during the sentencing hearing, make a statement or present any information in relation to the sentence.

"(b) CAPITAL CASES.—Notwithstanding any statute, rule, or other provision of law, a United States district court shall not order any victim of an offense excluded from the trial of a defendant accused of that offense because such victim may, during the sentencing hearing, testify as to the effect of the offense on the victim and the victim's family or as to any other factor for which notice is required under section 3593(a).

"(c) DEFINITION.—As used in this section, the term 'victim' includes all persons defined as victims in section 503(e)(2) of the Victims' Rights and Restitution Act of 1990."

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections at the beginning of chapter 223 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new item:

"3510. Rights of victims to attend and observe trial."

(c) CLARIFICATION OF GROUNDS FOR EXCLUSION.—Section 3593(c) of title 18, United States Code, is amended by inserting "For the purposes of the preceding sentence, the fact that a victim, as defined in section 3510, attended or observed the trial shall not be construed to pose a danger of creating unfair prejudice, confusing the issues, or misleading the jury," after "misleading the jury."

(d) EFFECT ON PENDING CASES.—The amendments made by this section shall apply in cases pending on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MCCOLLUM] and the gentleman from Florida [Mr. WEXLER], each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MCCOLLUM].

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Victims and their families often describe great frustration at the witnessing of the judicial process. Often this frustration comes from their feeling the process is not about them or their loss but all about the defendant. And while we all understand that the guilt or innocence of the defendant must be of primary concern to the Judiciary process, we become increasingly sensitive of the need to include the victim and victims' families in the criminal justice process in appropriate ways that they too can feel that justice has been done for them.

In 1990, Congress passed a law requiring that Federal prosecutors and others make their best efforts to ensure that victims of crime were accorded a number of rights, including the right to be notified of court proceedings, the right to confer with the attorney for the Government in the case, the right for information about the convictions,